

KANSAS.

RESOLUTIONS

OF

THE LEGISLATURE OF VERMONT,

IN RELATION TO

Kansas.

MAY 13, 1856.—Ordered to be printed.

STATE OF VERMONT.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
Montpelier, Vermont, Dec. 20, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit to you the accompanying resolutions on so much of the governor's message as relates to Kansas.

I have the honor to be, with considerations of high respect, your obedient servant,

STEPHEN ROYCE.

C. H. HAYDEN, *Secretary.*

Hon. JUSTIN S. MORRILL.

RESOLUTIONS on so much of the governor's message as relates to Kansas.

Whereas, the power and influence of the slave holding States in this Union has been, from an early period, successfully exerted in extending and strengthening the institution of human slavery, contrary to the clear intent of the founders of the government, and in violation of the spirit of the Constitution; and,

Whereas, in order still further to extend slavery and to establish it in the free Territories of the United States, there have been passed the fugitive slave law, so called, and the code establishing territorial government in the free Territories of Kansas and Nebraska, with provisions inviting the establishment of slavery therein; and in furtherance of this purpose, the citizens of Missouri have been suffered

to invade the Territory of Kansas, in armed bands, and to prevent thereby the people of said Kansas from making their own laws, or electing their own representatives, and by lawless force to exclude them from exercising any voice in the government of said Territory : and,

Whereas, the present administration of the general government has lent itself to these illegal and unjust schemes ; and has either openly aided therein, or secretly connived thereat ; and has taken no steps to execute the laws, or to protect the people of said Territory in the exercise of their constitutional rights thus publicly assailed and overthrown, and has, upon false pretences, removed such of its own officers as were not entirely subservient to those bad designs ; and,

Whereas, the right of citizens of slave holding States to hold slaves in, and transport them through, the free States, has of late been asserted, and the act attempted, and in consequence thereof, a citizen of a sister State has been put in prison under the usurped or grossly perverted power of a federal judge : therefore, it is by the senate and house of representatives of the State of Vermont,

Resolved, That the fugitive slave act of 1850 is contrary to the spirit of the Constitution of the United States, in subversion of the rights, and a flagrant outrage upon the spirit of a free people ; and that the same ought to be immediately repealed.

Resolved, That the enactment of the provisions of the territorial code of 1854, which abrogated the ancient prohibition of slavery in said Territories, and opened them to the wicked acts and calamitous results of that institution, was a gross fraud upon the just rights of the people ; a faithless breach of a solemn public compact, of which the slaveholding interest had already reaped the full benefit ; an insult to the free States, and in violation of the natural rights of man ; and that it merits the condemnation of the civilized world.

Resolved, That the armed and unlawful invasion of Kansas, by citizens of Missouri, and their illegal and forcible exclusion of the people of that Territory from all the political rights to which they were entitled in the government thereof, for the sole purpose of establishing slavery therein, under the semblance of law, was an act of atrocity unequalled in the political history of this nation, and directly subversive of the fundamental principles of republican government, and that the State of Missouri will be justly chargeable as a party to that wrong, unless she publicly and distinctly disavow said acts of her citizens, and use every means in her power to prevent a recurrence thereof.

Resolved, That the non-interference of the federal administration, to prevent or punish said outrages, justly makes it, in the estimation of mankind, accessory thereto, and unworthy of the confidence or respect of freemen.

Resolved, That Vermont, while she will in no way assail the constitutional or domestic rights of the slave holding States, will, to the utmost of her power, uphold and sustain the people of the Territories in their lawful effort to exclude slavery therefrom ; that she will, at all hazards, and to the last extremity, resist all encroachments upon the constitutional rights of the States ; that to the extent of her

ability she will oppose the extension of slavery into, and the existence thereof in, the Territories of the United States, and the admission into the Union of any State whose constitution does not perpetually prohibit slavery therein.

Resolved, That the slave who treads the soil of a free State, by the consent of his master, becomes thereby at once and forever free, and entitled to the exercise of the whole power of the State, when necessary, in the defence of his freedom.

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this general assembly, no district court of the United States has jurisdiction to issue writs of *habeas corpus*, or to render judgment thereon, except when necessary to the orderly proceeding of suits pending therein, or in order to inquire into the legality of commitments made under color of its authority, and, therefore, that the imprisonment of Passmore Williamson, under the authority of the district court of the United States for the eastern district of Pennsylvania, was not warranted by law, and void.

Resolved, That our senators be, and they are hereby instructed, and our representatives in Congress are requested, to do all in their power to carry out the spirit and intent of the foregoing resolutions.

Resolved, That the governor be requested to cause a copy of these resolutions, properly certified, to be sent to each of our senators and representatives, and to be by them communicated to Congress; and that a copy of the same be also sent to the governor of each State in the Union, with a request that they be laid before the legislature thereof.

In house of representatives, November 12, 1855.—Read and adopted.
GEO. R. THOMPSON, *Assistant Clerk*.

In senate, November 15, 1855.—Read and adopted in concurrence.
C. H. CHAPMAN, *Secretary*.

STATE OF VERMONT.

SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE,
Montpelier, December 20, 1855.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct copy of the resolutions adopted by the general assembly of this State, on file in this office.

CHARLES W. WILLARD,
Secretary of State.

